

ATTACHMENT A

St. Lucie County Board of County Commissioners Media Relations Policies Approved: August 2009 Updated: January 2015

The County Administrator or designee shall develop written procedures consistent with the Board of County Commissioners' Media Relations Policies as listed below:

I. SLCTV is a government access channel. Appropriate programming includes:

- A.** Public service announcements (PSAs) of government-sponsored events and services
- B.** Informational or instructional programs on various government agencies and government-sponsored services
- C.** Public meetings of government policy-making boards/commissions
- D.** Election coverage of vote counting data by the Supervisor of Elections Office only
- E.** Candidate forums and debates sponsored by the League of Women Voters
- F.** St. Lucie County-sponsored town hall meetings when approved by the Board of County Commissioners
- G.** Emergency service operations for natural and man-made disasters, pandemic and/or health-related emergencies, weather phenomena, poison prevention, first aid, etc.

II. SLCTV PROGRAMMING

- A.** It shall be the policy of SLCTV to cooperate with all related news agencies (commercial, educational, and industrial) to the extent that cooperation will not interfere with the operation of SLCTV or its policies and/or procedures.
- B.** SLCTV recognizes the jurisdiction of the Federal Communications Commission guidelines pertaining to television programming. It is the responsibility of the contributing entity to ensure that such guidelines are followed. Community standards of good taste will be adhered to at all times. The County Administrator or designee shall reject programming which does not comply with FCC guidelines and the following programming restrictions:
 - 1. Meetings/programs containing obscene, offensive or defamatory material/language;
 - 2. Programs containing copyrighted materials will not be broadcast without proper copyright authorization;
 - 3. Programs which have as the primary purpose to promote commercial/profit-making products or services, political candidates, products, trade or business;

4. Programs that contain any information concerning any lottery, gift enterprise, or similar promotion offering prizes based in whole or part upon lot or chance;
 5. Programs that directly solicit funding or donations unless for a county-sponsored event, program or service;
 6. Programs that would violate any federal, state, county or municipal statute or law;
 7. Political advertisements by or on behalf of legally declared candidates for public office; and
 8. Endorsements of ballot issues; sample ballots and ballot listings may be permitted if submitted by the St. Lucie County Supervisor of Elections or State Division of Elections spokesperson. Non-partisan voter education information on ballot referendums will only be allowed if the presentation is non-endorsing.
- C.** SLCTV will schedule programming based on availability of airtime in the following order of priority:
1. St. Lucie County Board of County Commissioners, County departments or programs for use in connection with official St. Lucie County-sponsored activities.
 2. Local, State and Federal government agencies for use in connection with their official non-partisan government and/or government-sponsored activities that affect the interests of local government and/or residents in St. Lucie County.
 3. Programs which impact St. Lucie County residents originated by and/or produced by non-profit group(s).
- D.** St. Lucie County Commissioners, Commissioner Aides, Constitutional Officers or other elected officials shall not personally host any programs aired on SLCTV. This prohibition does not apply to Commissioners, Constitutional Officers or other elected officials fulfilling their official duties.

III. USE OF PRODUCTION FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

- A.** Production Services / Equipment and Studio Facility Rental and Use:
1. SLCTV shall only provide free video production services for the St. Lucie County Board of County Commissioners and County departments, divisions and offices. An exception can be made in the event of a declared emergency or at the County Administrator's discretion.
 2. SLCTV may provide video production services for any non-County individual, government agency, business or corporation at a charge for those services sufficient to cover all related costs. These costs will include, but are not limited to, full compensation for staff, rental fees for equipment and miscellaneous fees to cover other costs associated with production(s).

3. Use of SLCTV equipment may be made available upon written request and only upon approval of the County Administrator or designee. An hourly rate will be charged to any non-County individual, government agency, business or corporation and an agreement approved by the County Attorney must be executed.
3. SLCTV may charge competitive rates to rent the studio and equipment to any non-County individual, government agency, business or corporation. The County Administrator or designee shall ensure that the renter is qualified to operate the studio and equipment or charge appropriate fee(s) to have SLCTV staff present. A facility use agreement must be executed.

IV. NON-PROFIT GRANT PROGRAM

- A. SLCTV may offer an annual competitive grant program for production of a video Public Service Announcement(s) (up to 60-seconds) to non-profit and/or government agencies. Written notice of the grant program will be provided and criteria for evaluation and selection of award-winner(s) shall be described. Criteria for selection may include, but is not limited to:
 1. Local non-profits or government agencies that have been in existence for at least one year;
 2. Value of in-kind services to be provided by the agency;
 3. Impact the Public Service Announcement will have on the community; and
 4. Level of development of concept or idea for the Public Service Announcement.
- B. The grant application(s) will be evaluated by a selection committee approved by the County Administrator or designee. Decisions of the selection committee may be appealed to the County Administrator.
- C. Once the grant(s) have been awarded for that year, any free or discounted production work for non-profit or non-county government agencies must be approved by the Board of County Commissioners.

V. PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

1. All press releases must be distributed by the Public Information Officer.
2. The Public Information Officer shall only distribute press releases for the St. Lucie County Board of County Commissioners and County departments, divisions and offices. An exception can be made in the event of a declared emergency or at the County Administrator's discretion.
3. County ribbon-cuttings, press conferences and special events must be coordinated with the Public Information Officer.
4. Department directors/division managers or designees may respond to any media request for general information, but should also brief the Public Information Officer following the interview. Members of the media seeking comments from the County should be directed to the Public Information Officer, who will either respond or coordinate a response with the appropriate department director/manager or County Administrator.

5. Members of the media seeking official comments from the Board of County Commissioners will be directed to the Commission Chair, followed by the Vice Chair, unless the media requests to speak to a specific County Commissioner.
6. The official logo for St. Lucie County is maintained by the Public Information Officer. St. Lucie County departments, divisions and offices are not authorized to alter or use a different logo for county promotions without prior approval from the County Administrator or designee. Digital copies of the county logo can be obtained from the Office of Media Relations.

VI. WEBSITE

1. All St. Lucie County departments, divisions and offices must utilize the County website and designate a staff person to be responsible for regularly updating the content on their department web pages and ensuring the accuracy of all posted information.
2. County departments, divisions and offices are encouraged to maximize the use of the department and/or County website to provide timely information to the general public. Public access to current County forms, procedures, event information, meetings, workshops and program information should be readily available to the greatest extent feasible.
3. Information posted on St. Lucie County's website must relate to programs and/or events managed or primarily sponsored by the Board of County Commissioners or Constitutional Officers.

VII. SOCIAL MEDIA

Purpose

To address the fast-changing landscape of the Internet and the way residents and businesses communicate and obtain information about St. Lucie County, the County may use social media to provide information on topics related to St. Lucie County governance, events managed or sponsored by the County, or information from federal, state, or other local government agencies.

The County shall exercise sole authority to decide what is "announced" or "spoken" on behalf of the County on the County's web site and on social media sites. This policy establishes internal procedures for the use of social media.

General

- All of the County's social media sites will be subject to approval by the Public Information Manager or designee.
- The County's website (www.stlucieco.gov) will remain the County's primary and predominant internet presence.
- Social media tools are intended primarily as informational channels to increase the County's ability to broadcast its messages to the widest possible audience.
- Wherever possible, content posted to the County's social media sites will also be made available on the County's website.
- Wherever possible, content posted to the County's social media sites must contain hyperlinks directing users back to the County's official website for in-depth information, forms, documents or online services necessary to conduct business with St. Lucie County.

- As is the case for the County's website, the department's director or designee will be responsible coordinating the content and upkeep of any social media site through the Public Information Manager or designee.
- The County's social media sites shall comply with the County and State conflict of interest code and applicable ethics rules and policies.
- Information posted/promoted on County social media sites will only be related to St. Lucie County governance, County-managed/sponsored events or information from other local, state and/or federal government agencies.
- The County's social media sites are subject to Chapter 119, Florida Statutes, the Florida Public Records Law (**119.07, FS**). Any content maintained in a social media format that is related to County business, including a list of subscribers and posted communication (with certain exceptions), is a public record. The Office of Media Relations is responsible for responding completely and accurately to any public records request for public records on social media. Such requests shall be handled in collaboration with the Attorney's Office. Wherever possible, social media sites shall clearly indicate that any articles and any other content posted or submitted for posting may be or are subject to public disclosure upon request. Users shall be notified that public disclosure requests must be directed to the relevant department's director or designee.
- Florida law and relevant County records retention schedules apply to social media formats and social media content. Unless otherwise addressed in a specific social media standards document, the Office of Media Relations shall preserve records required to be maintained pursuant to a relevant records retention schedule for the required retention period in a format that preserves the integrity of the original record and is easily accessible. This includes public comments received through social media after such comments are removed due to violation of the policy.
- All County social media sites shall notify users that the intended purpose of the site is to provide information on topics relating to St. Lucie County governance, County sponsored or managed events, or topics related to federal, state, or other local governments.
- Public comments that do not address the specified topic are not allowed and will be removed.
- Additionally, articles, posts and comments containing any of the following forms of content shall be presumptively considered off-topic, shall not be allowed, and shall be removed as soon as possible:
 - o Language or content that is lewd, lascivious, or obscene as determined by contemporary community standards
 - o Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation
 - o Sexual content or links to sexual content
 - o Solicitations of commerce
 - o Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity
 - o Information that may compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems
 - o Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party
 - o Political endorsements of, or opposition to specific candidates, ballot measures and/or referendums
 - o Links to third-party web pages.
- Users and visitors shall be notified that posts by children under the age of 13 are not allowed and will be removed, though the County assumes no obligation to affirmatively investigate the age of individuals using its sites.
- Users and visitors shall be informed by posting to the County's social media sites that the County disclaims any and all responsibility and liability for any materials posted in violation of the above policies.
- The County's social media guidelines must be displayed to users or made available by hyperlink. Any content removed based on violation of these guidelines must be retained,

including the time, date and identity of the poster in accordance with the State retention requirements.

- Users shall be notified that the County does not discriminate against any viewpoint, but reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is determined to be in violation of these policies or any applicable law.
- All new social media tools proposed for County use will be approved by the Public Information Manager, in coordination with the Information Technology Division.

PROCEDURES

Administration of St. Lucie County's Social Media Sites

- The Office of Media Relations will maintain a list of social media tools which are approved for use by County departments and staff.
- The Office of Media Relations will maintain a list of the County's social media sites, including login and password information.
- All County social media sites will be linked to an official St. Lucie County email address.
- Social media sites ordinarily will be set up and used only to broadcast information from the County to the public. The normal condition will be that the public cannot post messages or information to the County's social media sites.
- In specific instances when a County department wishes to solicit public comments via social media, the social media will be set up specifically for that limited purpose in that one instance and for a limited time period. At the conclusion of the comment period, the site will revert to the normal condition in which public comments cannot be posted.
- In those instances when public comment is solicited, the County must be able to immediately edit or remove content from social media sites.
- All information/biographies on the social media sites will include a statement or a link to County's website where the following disclaimer information will be posted:
 - o "This is an official St. Lucie County social media site. For more information about St. Lucie County please visit www.stlucieco.gov. This site is intended to provide information on topics related to St. Lucie County governance, events managed or sponsored by the County, or topics related to federal, state, or other local governments. In those limited instances when the County allows posts and comments on its sites, this shall constitute a limited public forum for the purpose of facilitating expedient collection of input from citizens on specified topics. Any direct comments to this page and its list of followers may be considered a public record which is subject to disclosure pursuant to Florida Public Records requirements. Public information requests must be directed to the Public Information Manager."
- The main image shall be the St. Lucie County logo or an appropriate County photograph which will be provided by the Public Information Manager.
- Proper grammar and standard AP style will be used on all social media sites with the absence of jargon and abbreviations whenever possible.
- Communication with followers/subscribers of social media sites will be timely and consistent with existing protocols and handled through the Public Information Manager or designee. Staff will address comments during normal hours of operations.
- The comment policy on the social media site shall include following disclaimer either posted directly to the site or to a link on the county's website:
 - o "Comments posted to this page will be monitored and will be removed if they do not address the specific topic. Under the St. Lucie County Social Media Use Policy, the County reserves the right to remove content that violates the County's Social Media Use Policy - <http://www.stlucieco.gov/media/index.htm>. Postings that will be considered off-topic and will be removed include, but are not limited to, posting that contain any lewd, lascivious, or obscene matter, threaten any person or organization, violate the legal ownership interest of another party, promote illegal activity, promote commercial services or products, or

promote/endorse/oppose specific political candidates or ballot items. The County disclaims any and all responsibility and liability for any materials posted in violation of the County's Social Media Use Policy. The County reserves the right to disable public comments from this site at any time, and to remove all public comments posted to that time. A complete statement of the County's Social Media Use Policy can be found at <http://www.stlucieco.gov/media/index.htm>."

- A successful social media sites requires consistent attention. The department's director will designate one or more staff members as page administrators who will coordinate the updating and monitoring the department's social media site with the Public Information Manager and Webmaster. Only designated staff members will make posts.
- The department's director or designee will be responsible for ensuring content is not stale through the Public Information Manager. The department will designate one or more back-up administrators.
- If pages are not properly maintained, monitored or generating public interest, the Public Information Manager will have the authority to deactivate the page.